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Public Affairs

Bangkok

Weekly Report

Date: November 11, 2005

Bangkok, 11/03-04/2005: IRC Teaches Thai Journalists How to Find Accurate Information about America

Program: Embassy: IRC Outreach/Event

Subject: Public Diplomacy/Mutual understanding/Exchanges

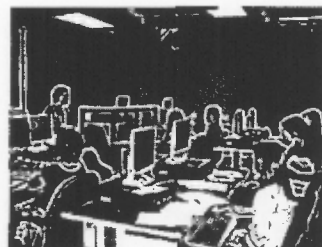
Report:

On November 3-4, 2005, the Information Resource Center in Bangkok provided training to 40 journalists from the Naew Na Newspaper (Thai-language daily newspaper, readership: 50,000). The topic of the training was how to retrieve accurate information about America from the Internet. The journalists were introduced to web resources for the media, including major information resources provided by the Department of State.

Result:

Excellent. Participants were delighted to find out about the wealth of information available for journalists. Among the many encouraging comments from the trainees, one journalist remarked, "I wish we had longer time. The training provided us with useful tips on searching the Internet. We are now able to more precisely locate information necessary for our jobs. I graded this training an A+."

Photo Caption: Thai journalists, guided by IRC Director Patha Suwannarat, finding out how to search for accurate information on the Internet.



Bangkok, 11/04/05: Student Advising at Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University

Program: Embassy: Seminar/Conference/Tour

Subject: Public Diplomacy/Education

Report: The Cultural Unit organized a booth and gave a talk on "Higher Education for Arts Students" at the prestigious Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University, on

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November 4. This event showcased for Faculty of Arts students and lecturers the possibilities of furthering their advanced studies in several countries, including the U.S., the United Kingdom, and Japan.

Result: Excellent. The information on the U.S. was provided to approximately 150 students and lecturers at the booth and approximately 40 participants attended the session asking about student visas and scholarship opportunities.

Photo Caption 1: Students visit the U.S. Embassy's booth asking about scholarships and student visa information at the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University.



Photo Caption 2: Cultural Unit staff give a presentation on "Study in the U.S." to Faculty of Arts students and lecturers at Chulalongkorn University.

Bangkok, 11/04/05: Thai Prosecutors and Police Engage in First-Ever Dialogue on Task Force Development with U.S. Law Enforcement Officials

Program: Embassy: American Centers/Corners

Embassy: Seminar/Conference/Tour

Subject: Democracy and Human Rights/Civil Rights,
Public Diplomacy\Mutual understanding/exchanges
Security\Regional stability,
Global Issues\Crimes, Global Issues\Drugs

Report:

PAS Bangkok, in cooperation with the Narcotics Affairs Section and the U.S. Department of Justice, conducted a digital video conference on task force development linking experts in Honolulu and San Diego to two audiences of approximately seventy senior Thai prosecutors and police officials in both Bangkok and Chiang Mai. Speakers from the U.S. Attorney's Office in Hawaii, including the United States Attorney for the District of Hawaii, and federal prosecutors and federal law enforcement agents from the U.S. Attorney's Office in San Diego, explained the process of creating and developing joint prosecution and law enforcement task forces. The experts provided Thai officials, mostly from the Office of the Attorney General, the Department of Special Investigation, the Immigration Bureau and the Mahidol

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University Criminology Department, with a description of how to create and develop a task force. They also addressed matters such as budget concerns and asset allocation.

Thai prosecutors and police officials engaged the U.S. speakers on questions about allocation of personnel and about who handles the promotion of officers, given that members of joint task forces represent different agencies. They also asked about how tensions between different agencies can be diffused in cases where task force members disagree. They were also interested in the prosecutorial discretion of federal prosecutors in determining which cases from the task forces are ultimately charged by the U.S. Attorney's Office.

At the American Corner in Chiang Mai there was an audience of twenty eight-- including six attorneys, one police officer, two professors, and thirteen Chiang Mai University students taking a course in Public International Law, Government and American Politics. The students demonstrated a great deal of interest by passing written questions to the speaker.

Result: Excellent. The DVC engaged participants in a ground-breaking discussion on how Thai prosecutors and police can come together to bring cases to court sooner and more efficiently. Thailand lacks a fully developed task force among law enforcement officials. The DVC linked Bangkok and Chiang Mai to Hawaii and San Diego. With over seven U.S. speakers contributing to the discussion, the Thai audiences were exposed to a rare glimpse of the real-life challenges and successes of task forces in the U.S.

Photo Caption 1: Over thirty prosecutors, police officials, and professors attended the Task Force Development DVC in Bangkok- making this the second time PAS Bangkok has facilitated a DVC with experts in Honolulu, San Diego, and Chiang Mai.

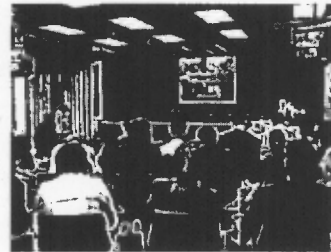
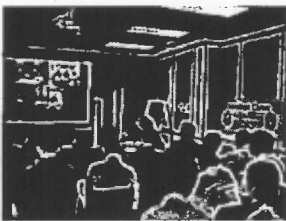


Photo Caption 2: At the American Corner in Chiang Mai, the audience of thirty people were comprised of law and government students. Students posed several questions to the U.S. attorneys in Honolulu and San Diego.

Bangkok, 11/08/05: Proving a Negative: Embassy Proves No CIA Covert Prison at IBB Station

Program: Embassy: Press Event/Product/Interview
Subject: Security\Counter-terrorism

Report:

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PAS facilitated access for press to accompany a provincial governor's tour of the U.S. International Broadcasting Bureau's short-wave radio broadcasting facility in Udon Thani Province after some Thai media printed anonymous accusations that there was a secret CIA prison hidden in the compound. Approximately 80 people including 50 local and Bangkok-based reporters as well as police and other Thai security and provincial officials, all led by the Udon Thani governor, were received by IBB and PAS staff.

Results:

Excellent. On the same day, Channel 3 (reach: 3,060,000), Channel 5 (reach: 680,000), Channel 7 (reach: 10,030,000), Channel 9 (reach: 1,700,000), Channel 11 (reach: 340,000), and iTV (reach: 1,700,000), during their primetime and late-night news programs, aired footage of the press event plus an explanation by IBB's staff that there was no CIA's secret prison hidden in the compound.

On November 9, 2005, an English-language paper The Nation (readership: 69,000) printed on page 4A an article under the headline "No Secret Terror Jail in Udon," while Post Today (readership: 69,000) headlined the article on page A8 "U.S. Embassy Leads Press Tour to Ban Dung; Hopes to Silence Report on CIA's Secret Prison." Matichon (readership: 670,000) carried a photo of the station on front page and headlined its article on page 13 "Media Visit VOA Station; no Secret Prison Found," while Daily News (readership: 5,700,000) printed an article on page 14 under the headline "Media Visit American Radio Station." Khao Sod (readership: 697,000), Naew Na (readership: 50,000), and Krungthep Turakit (readership: 113,000) printed the photos of the station and the group of reporters led by Udon Thani governor on page 14, 6, and 4 respectively with captions saying that there was no CIA's prison in the compound.

After the press coverage on November 8-9, 2005, the speculation and reports about the CIA's covert prison in Thailand have decreased.

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